

Contact Centre Adviser

Tier One Advice Services

Job Pack

Thank you for your interest in working at the Citizens Advice service that supports residents across Manchester. This job pack should give you everything you need to know to apply for this role and what it means to work for the Citizens Advice service.

In this pack you'll find:

- Our values
- 4 things you should know about us
- How the Citizens Advice network works
- Information about the organisation, team and the role
- The role profile and person specification
- The application process and training for the role
- The benefits of working for the organisation
- Our approach to equality and diversity

Want to chat about the role?

If you want to have a chat about the role further, you can contact one of our Operations Managers:

Daphne Baldi daphne.baldi@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk or
Katy Sweeney katy.sweeney@citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk

To apply submit your CV via our website:
www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us

CAM is committed to being an inclusive organisation, we value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. We want our teams to be representative of the diverse communities we serve, however you identify, or whatever background you bring with you, we welcome and encourage your application.

Assessment Day:	Thursday 23 May 2024
Start Date:	Monday 3 June 2024

Our values

We're inventive. We're not afraid of trying new things and learning by getting things wrong. We question every idea to make it better and we change when things aren't working.

We're generous. We work together, sharing knowledge and experience to solve problems. We tell it like it is and respect everyone.

We're responsible. We do what we'll say we do and keep our promises. We remember that we work for a charity and use our resources effectively.

4 things you should know about us

We're local. We offer digital access services from a wide range of community locations across the city region, or from our Mobile Advice Unit which travels around the city. We also have a well developed service offered by telephone, email, webchat and video call. We offer direct support to over 50,000 clients per year with 124,000 issues and helped achieve £9 million of financial gains for residents last year.

We're also national. We support the wider Citizens Advice network of 300 independent charities by providing telephone and digital advice to hundreds of thousands of people across England & Wales each year, through our Consumer Service and Money Advice Service Contact Centres.

We're here for everyone. Our advice helps people solve problems and our advocacy helps fix problems in society. Whatever the problem, we won't turn people away.

We're listened to - and we make a difference. Our trusted brand and the quality of our research mean we make a real impact on behalf of the people who rely on us.

How the Citizens Advice Network works

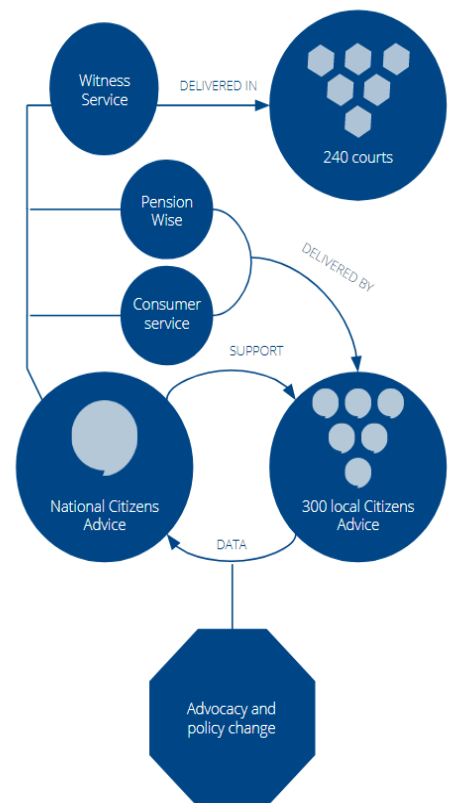
Citizens Advice Manchester is a member of the national Citizens Advice service which is made up of a network of around 300 local Citizens Advice members.

Citizens Advice nationally is a charity which includes 1,000 national staff working in one of our 5 offices or as homeworkers or as part of the Witness Service from over 240 courts across England and Wales 3,000 Witness Service volunteers.

Local Citizens Advice are all independent charities, delivering services from over 600 local Citizens Advice outlets and over 1,800 community centres, GPs' surgeries and prisons.

The network does this with 6,500 local staff and over 23,000 trained volunteers.

Our reach means 99% of people In England and Wales can access a local Citizens Advice within a 30-minute drive of where they live.



The organisation

Citizens Advice Manchester is a charity which provides free, independent, confidential and impartial advice to everyone on their rights and responsibilities. We employ around 200 people and are one of the largest and most diversely funded Local Citizens Advice within the network. We are modern, innovative and progressive aiming to provide the advice people need for the problems they face and to improve the policies and practices that affect people's lives.

Here are 4 ways you can find out more about us:

- Watch videos about the work we do: [Citizens Advice - YouTube](#) and [Find a way forward](#)
- Watch a video about our volunteers [Volunteers at CAM](#)
- Take a look at our [website](#)
- Take a look at the [national Citizens Advice](#) website and the [Campaigning site](#)

The role and team/s

The role you're applying for is **Contact Centre Adviser** within our **Tier One Advice Service**. Teams in this service act as the first point of contact for people accessing information, advice and support on a range of topics. *If you are friendly, reliable and eager to learn we'll give you all the training and support you need for a great career!*

Advisers within our Tier One Contact Centres provide information and advice to clients on their rights and the action they can take. In this role the teams you will work across are:

Adviceline: Advisers on this service act as the first point of contact for clients accessing our wider advice service. This service typically receives enquiries focused around benefit, debt, housing and employment issues. The role involves conducting an initial assessment of the clients needs and giving basic self help information or providing fact sheets, if the client needs further assistance our Advisers then discuss the next steps they need to obtain this.

Consumer Helpline: Advisers on this service advise clients using the protection offered to them by the Consumer Rights Act. The role involves giving clients advice when things have gone wrong with a purchase, or when they have been treated unfairly as a consumer. This can include issues such as: credit and store cards, faulty goods, counterfeit goods, poor service, contracts, builders, rogue traders etc.

Energy Advice Service: Advisers on this service are part of a team delivering a dedicated energy/welfare support service to individuals who are vulnerable or disadvantaged. The service offers local and regional energy advice to people at risk of fuel poverty.

Before you start advising our clients, you'll receive full training in the role. We offer a supportive environment, where our people feel valued and enjoy plenty of opportunities for professional development within our organisation.

Applicants need to be comfortable working in a target driven environment and have a desire to help people. You might be just the person we're looking for if you have:

- Experience delivering excellent customer service in a contact centre or customer service environment
- A professional manner with good communication skills and the ability to deal confidently and sensitively with members of the public over the phone
- A commitment to equality for all

The type of work you'll be doing

To help you gain an understanding of the type of work employees on our Helplines do here are some examples of how we help our clients:

Case Study:

Due to changes in her income from her employment Lisa's claim for Universal Credit had been stopped over 5 months ago. As a result of her claim being stopped Lisa had accrued rent arrears and other debts and was subsequently evicted. Lisa and her daughter were temporarily staying with her mum.

Our Adviser assessed Lisa's situation and advised on how to challenge the Universal Credit decision, gave assistance with completing the reconsideration form and advised what evidence to include. They also advised on how to present as homeless and how she could apply for rehousing. Finally a full debt assessment was completed and Lisa was referred to our specialist debt team for further support.

Following our assistance Lisa updated us that with as a result of our support her Universal Credit was put back into payment (and backdated for 5 months!), she had successfully registered for rehousing and had been offered a property and was due to move in soon and that with the help of our debt team she had managed to make affordable repayment arrangements towards her debts.

We were also able to refer Lisa for further help with applying for a grant for white goods for her new property.

Case Study:

Ms Smith contacted us about a used car she recently bought. Two weeks after purchase, the car went into limp mode when she was driving on the motorway with her small children. She was recovered from the motorway with her car and the children and told by the Recovery Service that the car was not safe to drive. Since then, she has struggled to get the garage she bought it from to repair the car or provide a refund. Ms Smith was hoping to get through to Trading Standards but her call has been answered by us.

Our adviser explained all of her rights under the Consumer Rights Act to Ms Smith and gave guidance on the steps she could take to get the trader to fix the problem or refund her. We also took details about the purchase, the car and the trader and made a referral to her local Trading Standards office to alert them to a possible safety issue with the car. Although initially frustrated that she couldn't speak to Trading Standards directly, once our adviser explained the referral relationship, Ms Smith was reassured that some action would be taken to stop a similar thing happening to someone else.

Case Study:

Mrs Ryan is 87 and lives alone. She has contacted us because she's worried she might have been scammed. Earlier in the morning, two men came round to her home and informed her that her roof was in a dangerous state and could collapse at any point. Distressed at this news, she has signed a contract to pay them £20,000 for roofing work. The men took her to the bank and had her withdraw £250 as a deposit to pay them there and then. The men are due to return tomorrow. She has since spoke to her neighbour who assured her that her roof is fine but she is worried she will be in trouble if she doesn't pay the rest of the £20,000.

We discussed the case with Mrs Ryan and confirmed she would still be within her rights to cancel the contract. Mrs Ryan was very relieved that she has the opportunity to get out of the contract. We also took details of the trader to make a referral to Mrs Ryan's local Trading Standards office to make them aware of a possible doorstep crime.

Case Study:

Shauna contacted us because she is worried about not being able to pay her soaring energy bills. Due to her health condition, Shauna's heating has to be on for most of the time during the colder months.

Shauna believes she is not entitled to Universal Credit, as her husband is employed.

After assessing Shauna's circumstances, our Adviser was able to deliver thorough energy advice which helped Shauna to make potential savings of over £200 a year.

Our adviser also completed a benefit entitlement check and advised Shauna that she could expect to receive an average of £740.03 monthly from Universal Credit, as well as being entitled to an extra £354.28 monthly, if awarded the Limited Capability for Work Related Activity element.

After speaking to our adviser, Shauna was very relieved as she could confidently submit a claim for Universal Credit and Limited Capability for Work Related Activity.

Role profile

Role:	Contact Centre Adviser
Location:	central Manchester
Salary:	£23,400
Hours:	37.5 hours per week - Monday to Friday
Reporting to:	Operations Manager/Team Leader
Contract term:	Permanent

Purpose of the Role

The principal focus of the post is to:

- Be the initial point of contact for clients accessing our Tier One Advice Service.
- Provide an initial advice/assessment which will either resolve the client's problems directly or will forward them to the appropriate type and level of advice resources best suited to their needs.

Key accountabilities	Key elements & tasks
Service Delivery	Deliver excellent customer service.
	Conduct short, focused interviews either by telephone or digitally to explore the client's situation and issues that need resolving.
	Make a judgement about what the next steps should be, based on understanding the problem, the client's capability and effective use of resources and other agencies which provide advice.
	Where appropriate, provide quality assured assisted self-help/early intervention information.
	Where appropriate, refer or signpost customers to one of the external partners in line with documented procedures.
	Collect and record all relevant information on to the appropriate case recording system, to meet monitoring and evaluation requirements.
	Staff the telephone during the Service opening hours.
Referral and Signposting Management	Where additional advice needs are identified follow documented procedures to refer or signpost those customers to an agreed external partner or Local Citizens Advice.
Performance and Quality Standards	Meet the individual performance targets and KPI's of the Tier One Advice, ensuring that the service provided meets the requirements and quality standards specified.
	Inform the Line Manager where performance targets/KPIs are at risk of not being met and any reasons for underperformance.
Team Working	Work collaboratively with volunteers by providing day to day on-site support and guidance and on-going coaching and mentoring.
Personal Development & Training	Prepare for and attend regular performance review meetings as required.
	Attend training opportunities in order that knowledge and skills are maintained and attend training courses as required by the line manager.
	Keep up to date with relevant advice issues, consumer law and maintain an up to date working knowledge of all new relevant legislation.
	Attend staff meetings and internal/external forums and meetings as required.
Research & Campaign Work	Support our research and campaigns work through various channels including case studies, data collection and client consent.

General	Uphold the aims and principles of Citizens Advice and its equality & diversity policies.
	Abide by health & safety guidelines & share responsibility for your own safety and that of colleagues.
	Work in a positive and supportive manner and contribute to the creation of a good team environment.
<p>Please note that this job description does not constitute a 'term and condition of employment'. It is provided only as a guide to assist an individual in the performance of the job and is not included to be an inflexible list of tasks.</p> <p>Citizens Advice Manchester is a fast-moving organisation and therefore an employee's duties may be varied from time to time. The post holder accepts that they may be required to work flexibly and undertake any other work or duties as may reasonably be required, within the scope of and commensurate to the nature of the post.</p>	

Person specification

Essential
Previous experience of dealing with members of the public either face to face or on the phone.
At least 6 months experience of providing a high standard of customer service in a fast-paced target driven environment (Contact Centre experience desirable).
An ability to gather and assess information quickly and accurately in order to identify the best next step for clients.
An ability to communicate confidently and effectively both verbally and in writing.
An ability to work without close supervision and to identify and meet deadlines.
Experience of and an ability to deal with frustrated/angry/distraught clients in a calm and effective manner.
A demonstrable commitment to personal development and learning new skills and abilities.
Other requirements for the role
An understanding of positive workplace values and behaviours with the ability to contribute to an adaptable, respectful and responsible organisational culture in line with our values and Behaviour Framework .
Ability and willingness to work as part of a team and a commitment to collective team responsibility.
Understanding of, and commitment to, the aims and principles of the Citizens Service in which equality and diversity is embedded throughout.
Awareness that Citizens Advice clients are at the heart of everything we do.

The application process

Stage 1 - Apply

You are required to submit a copy of your CV, this will be screened against the role description and person specification to assess whether your skills and experience is a good fit.

SUBMIT YOUR CV VIA OUR WEBSITE:

www.citizensadvicemanchester.org.uk/work-with-us

Please ensure your CV includes the following information:

- Your contact details (address, **telephone number** and email address)
- Information about your education history
- Information about your career history
- Details of any professional qualifications

Stage 2 - Telephone Assessment

If successful, you will be invited to participate in a short telephone assessment (lasting for around 10-15 minutes) during the call you'll be asked to talk about your previous experience and the skills that you have, you will also have an opportunity to ask any questions you may have about the role or our service.

We often give 24-48 hours notice of this call, if the time/date suggested isn't convenient for you please advise and we can rearrange.

If successful at the telephone assessment stage you'll be invited to complete a short competency based assessment (lasting 15-20 minutes), this is sent to you via email so that you can complete it at your convenience. Those achieving a pass score will be invited to attend our Assessment Day (see Stage 3 below).

Stage 3 - Assessment Day

Candidates who are successful at telephone assessment and who achieve a pass score on the competency exercise will be invited to participate in an Assessment Day. During this we'll provide you with information on the history of the Citizens Advice service, our background, aims and principles and missions and values.

We'll tell you all about our Adviceline, Consumer Advice and Energy Services Teams, the type of work our people do and the nature of calls received. You'll also be asked to participate in some group exercises and there'll also be a chance to see our contact centre in operation.

Lunch will be provided and successful candidates will be invited to stay and attend a short face to face interview.

The Assessment Day is planned for Thursday 23 May 2024

Training & Beginning the Role

In order to be fully competent to advise our clients, all successful candidates will need to complete a full time training course (paid at the full time rate). Training will be held at our offices in the City Centre and is due to begin on: **Monday 3 June 2024**

What we give our staff

We value all our people and can offer a supportive culture within a charity setting that is committed to social justice. We set out the commitment we make to our people in the [CAM People Commitment](#). The role has an attractive remuneration package with excellent terms including:

- A 37.5 hour working week (Monday to Friday, no shifts!)
- Pension and life assurance schemes
- Cycle to work scheme
- City centre location with free tea and coffee
- Health plan with 24/7 telephone support service
- Generous holiday entitlement starting at 25 days per year (in addition to bank holidays) and rising with long service to a maximum of 30

Equality & Diversity at CAM

Citizens Advice Manchester recognises the positive value of diversity, promotes equality and challenges unfair discrimination. We recognise people with different backgrounds, skills, attitudes and experiences bring fresh ideas and perceptions, and we wish to encourage and harness these differences to make our services more relevant and approachable. Citizens Advice Manchester will not discriminate or tolerate discriminatory behaviour on the grounds of race, colour, sex, transgender, disability, nationality, national or ethnic origin, religion or belief, marital/partnership or family status, sexual orientation, age, social class, educational background, employment status, working pattern, trade union membership or any other irrelevant factor in any aspect of employment.

Our values include a commitment to equality and fairness, and to valuing each other. All our employees are expected to have read and understood our Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. Breaches of the policy may lead to disciplinary action.

Dignity at Work

Citizens Advice Manchester is committed to providing a culture in which all staff value each other and are able to work together to their full potential in an inclusive environment free from harassment, bullying and other unacceptable forms of behaviour. Unacceptable behaviour in the workplace will be actively dealt with, all complaints will be taken seriously, confidentiality will be respected and victimisation of those that raise complaints will not be tolerated.

Our values include commitments to work together and value each other - all our employees are expected to have read and understood our Dignity at Work Policy and to ensure they behave in accordance with its principles. All staff are responsible for helping to create and maintain a positive and inclusive working environment free from bullying and harassment. All managers have a particular responsibility for ensuring a supportive and inclusive working environment in which dignity at work is actively promoted.

Probationary Policy

New appointments are subject to a probationary period which begins once you have completed training. At the end of the probationary period the outcome of the assessment may be confirmation of post; notice of dismissal; or at our discretion, an extension of the probationary period.

Our People

We value the people who work here - and we show that in what we offer. As well as things like annual leave and our workplace pension, working at Citizens Advice means getting access to many benefits:

- **A commitment to your development.** We have a coordinated staff training and development pathway. This means that training will be provided both for your current job and for your development.

- **Employee assistance programme.** Once out of probation everyone working at Citizens Advice Manchester has access to professional and completely confidential counselling and advisory services.

Equality and Fairness in Recruitment

We are fully committed to stand up and speak up for those who face inequality and disadvantage. We want this to be reflected in the diversity of the people who work for us.

To help us achieve this, we aim to make our recruitment process as fair as it can be. We also offer support to disabled candidates to make sure no one loses out on a role because of their condition.

We judge the application, not the person. The select panel won't see your personal details. This makes sure each person's response is judged on its merits and not on their background.

Our commitment to equality runs through everything we do - read [Transforming together: trusted advice in times of change](#) for more information.

Criminal Convictions

Anyone who applies to work within Citizens Advice Manchester will be asked to disclose details of unspent convictions during the recruitment process. Having a criminal record will not necessarily bar you from working for Citizens Advice Manchester – much will depend on the type of job you have applied for and the background and circumstances of your offence. However, our national policy is that we will not take on anyone with a conviction for a sexual offence against a child or vulnerable adult, regardless of when the offence took place.

Disclosure and Barring Service Checks (DBS)

Some Citizens Advice Manchester positions may require the successful candidate to undergo a DBS check, this will be specified within the job pack.